

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS MORE
PREPARATORY

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 1, 2008

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Thomas More Preparatory—Marian and their centennial celebration. Located in my hometown of Hays, Kansas, Thomas More Prep recently concluded a 3 day festival commemorating 100 years of educational service. I stand before you in celebration of this remarkable milestone.

TMP, as it is known in Northwest Kansas, has served as a pillar of faith-based learning for generations. Founded by Capuchin Priests in 1908 as Hays Catholic College, the school featured a combination high school and junior college curriculum and would become a vibrant military academy with an active Junior ROTC program. The school would evolve into St. Joseph's Military Academy.

St. Joseph's Military academy was not alone in forming the foundation of what would become TMP-M. Girl's Catholic High School, the female counterpart to the Academy, was founded in 1918. As was the case with St. Joseph's, the school moved several times before it settled and was renamed Marian High School.

The name Thomas More Prep was coined in 1970. In 1981, Marian High School and Thomas More Preparatory merged to form the school that is being recognized today. Madam Speaker, I emphasize the history of this fine institution in an effort to illustrate the dedication and sacrifice exhibited by those charged with its continuation. To administrate and fund a parochial school on the plains of Kansas for one hundred years is no small feat. Admiration is due to Fathers Henry Kluepfel and Eugene Beckner who founded what would become St. Joseph's Military Academy in 1908 as well as Sister M. Reminga Neder, and Fr. Dominic Schuster who founded what would become Marian High school in 1918. Through their perseverance and leadership, an institution was established that would reach a global student body.

As an institution serving many international borders through the years, TMP-M has created a worldwide network of faithful alumni committed to the advancement of the school. The alumni of this educational system have much to be proud of. Each individual associated with TMP-M's rich history has contributed to the overall identity that the school enjoys. It is through their generosity that the school continues to provide the services necessary to continue the long tradition of academic excellence.

Admiration and thanks are also due to Ms. Jean Ross, current president of the school, Mr. Denis Coakley, principal and headmaster, and Mr. Gene Flax, assistant principal of student affairs. Through their faithful leadership, TMP-M has a bright future to coincide with their storied past. I ask God to continue to show his grace on this institution and I pray for its ongoing success.

I ask you, Madam Speaker, to join me in congratulating Thomas More Prep.—Marian on 100 years of service to its students, alumni and the greater northwest Kansas community.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4137,
HIGHER EDUCATION OPPOR-
TUNITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the conference report on the Higher Education Opportunity Act. As a conferee on this bill, I am very pleased that we have a final bill before us. I want to thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for all their hard work on this bill, and I especially thank them for including provisions that are very important to people in Michigan.

Higher education is vitally important for students entering the workforce and for the global competitiveness of this country. This bill will ensure students have better access to higher education, and that they have received a high quality educational experience when they receive their degree. Now that a college degree is the bare minimum requirement for so many jobs, the need for better access is stronger than ever.

Let me comment on some specific provisions in the bill.

In 2007, Representative BLUMENAUER and I joined together to introduce the Higher Education Sustainability Act (H.R. 3637). I commend Representative BLUMENAUER for his leadership in "greening" colleges and universities, and I am grateful that he allowed me to partner with him on an issue that is so dear to my heart. I am very pleased that provisions of our bill have been included in the conference report, especially now when energy prices and shortages are on everyone's mind.

Simply put, sustainability is meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. As population growth, urban development and growing energy use place stress on our ecosystem, it is imperative that we develop innovative and successful sustainable operations and programs.

Colleges and universities are in a unique position to foster new knowledge, evaluate policies and discover new technologies to address sustainability. Sustainable operations and programs on university campuses include water and energy conservation, recycling, and academic programs such as engineering courses that encourage innovative product designs, e.g., alternative fuels for cars, other new energy sources, and new types of packaging that use fewer natural materials.

The conference report contains two key sustainability provisions. First, it convenes a Summit on Sustainability with higher education experts working in the area of sustainable operations and programs. The Federal Government and university and business leaders are encouraged to identify best practices in sustainability by promoting current efforts, enhancing research and identifying opportunities for partnerships to expand sustainable operations and academic programs. Also, it authorizes the Sustainability Grant Program. The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, is authorized to award grants to colleges and universities to establish sustainability research programs, such as developing

new alternative energy sources. It also allows schools to implement sustainability practices on campus.

The conference report also contains an important study of distance education. It requires the Secretary of Education to contract with the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a scientifically valid study of the quality of distance education, as compared to traditional, campus-based education. With so many students using distance education and a huge Federal investment in helping students attend college, it is critical that we effectively evaluate new modes of instruction to ensure that our students are receiving a topnotch education.

Finally, the conference report contains an array of provisions related to science, technology, engineering and math, collectively "STEM", education. Notably, it includes the National STEM Database to allow students with an interest in the STEM fields to more easily find financial aid. Also, it authorizes important loan forgiveness for college graduates pursuing careers in the STEM fields, and it authorizes the Mathematics and Science Scholars Program to award scholarships to students pursuing STEM majors. Now, more than ever, we must increase the size of our STEM workforce to maintain our competitiveness and national security.

In closing, I support this conference report since it helps students and makes many overdue improvements to the Higher Education Act. I urge all Members to vote in support of it.

COMMEMORATING JACK C. BINION
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S RIBBON
CUTTING CEREMONY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 1, 2008

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Birdville Independent School District upon the construction of an outstanding new educational facility in Richland Hills, Texas. This new building is an exciting step forward for the school district, and the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Jack C. Binion Elementary is planned for August 21, 2008.

Binion Elementary is capably headed by Principal Paul Anderson and Assistant Principal Hilda Hager. The school welcomes students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, and has a total enrollment of over 500 students. Binion's mascot is the Bobcat, and their colors are maroon and white.

Binion Elementary is the newest facility for the Birdville Independent School District, which consists of 32 schools and over 22,000 students. Binion was founded in 1954 as Glenview Elementary. The first year the school opened, construction on the cafeteria wasn't completed until November. For the first few months of classes, food had to be brought in from another school each day. The first Principal was Mr. Jack C. Binion, and his leadership was instrumental in getting the school off to an excellent start. In 2003, Glenview was renamed Jack C. Binion Elementary School.

In the fall of 2006, voters approved the construction of a new campus for the elementary school. In summer of 2007, construction